

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 03-13

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Birkholz and Hardiman Urge Supreme Court to Hear Pledge of Allegiance Appeal

Senators Ask Supreme Court to allow students to recite "Under God"

Friday, March 7, 2003- Senator Patricia Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township, and Senator Bill Hardiman, R-Kentwood, yesterday introduced resolutions urging the United States Supreme Court to quickly hear an appeal from the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision that it is unconstitutional for public school students to recite the phrase "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Earlier this week, the Court issued a stay of the ban to recite the phrase "Under God" within Pledge of Allegiance in classrooms, which indicates they want to preserve the status of the current pledge until the Supreme Court can render a decision.

"With the difficult times we have faced as a nation in the past year and a half since 911, I firmly believe that reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, as we have known it, is a fundamental comfort to all Americans," said Birkholz. "The inclusion of the phrase, "Under God" is not the endorsement of religion by the state, but an acknowledgment of the roots of our strength and faith as a nation."

"Generations of Michigan families and American citizens have shown pride in our nation by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance," Hardiman added. "The phrase "under God" has not harmed our students expressing that patriotism, and it should be retained for future generations."

The resolutions will go to the full Senate for consideration.

Editor's Note: Comments from Senator Birkholz regarding the Senate Concurrent Resolution urging the United States Supreme Court to hear an appeal from the 9th Circuit Court decision that it is unconstitutional for public school students to recite the phrase "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance are available on the Senate Majority Hotline at (517) 373-4000 or www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire.